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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Letter dated 18 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Moldova to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the comments of the Ministry of Reintegration of the Republic of Moldova on the alleged "economic blockade of Transnistria" (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 27.

(*Signed*) Alexei **Tulbure**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Moldova to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Comments of the Ministry of Reintegration of the Republic of Moldova on the alleged economic blockade of Transnistria

18 May 2007

Regarding speculations spread by the national and international press and statements by some foreign officials about the alleged economic blockade against Transnistria, the Reintegration Ministry states that:

Decision No. 301 of the Government of the Republic of Moldova of 17 March 2007 concerning the amendment of Government Decision No. 815 of 2 August 2005 was taken as the result of a set of measures designed to create favourable conditions and support export operations carried out by economic agents all over the Republic of Moldova, including by enterprises in the Transnistrian region of Moldova. In particular, decision No. 301 grants enterprises from the Transnistrian region, which have temporary registration with the Moldovan State Licensing Chamber, the right to receive preferential certificates of origin for exports to European Union and Commonwealth of Independent States member States as well as to other European States. Economic agents from the left bank of the Dniestre River, regardless of whether their registration is permanent or temporary, enjoy the same rights and opportunities as other enterprises based in Moldova, and are also exempt from all taxes and fees payable to the State budget of Moldova. Payments are made exclusively to the budget of the Transnistrian region. Moreover, the Moldovan State Licensing Chamber issues licences free of charge to economic agents from the left bank of the Dniestre River for all kinds of licensed activities.

At the same time, it should be emphasized that the issuance of certificates of origin by the competent bodies of the Moldovan Government implies some bilateral and multilateral commitments vis-à-vis the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States and other States and organizations regarding the control of the goods provenance. These commitments involve effective measures to impede re-export and smuggling. Government decision No. 301, which provides for the legalization of imports by Transnistrian economic agents, covers only raw material and spare parts imported to produce goods intended for export. The decision is in line with relevant international norms and standards and with Moldova's commitments as a member of the World Trade Organization.

Hence, it is clear that speculations about the alleged economic blockade against Transnistria entering a new phase are ill-intentioned provocations aimed at misinforming businesses on the left bank of the Dniestre as well as the leadership of certain States. The successful performance of Transnistrian enterprises and the increasing volume of exports from the region prove that the existing export/import mechanism is effective. Despite all assertions to the contrary, the Government of the Republic of Moldova, reiterating the Declaration of 24 March 2006, guarantees the enterprises on the left bank of the Dniestre that equitable and transparent rules for legal foreign trade will be preserved.

In this context, the Ministry draws the attention of the Tiraspol authorities to the activity of some dubious transport firms controlled by prominent individuals in the region, which are resulting in millions of dollars of losses to the local budget. Eliminating these underground schemes, presented as a way to fight the railway blockade, will allow for the resumption of normal rail service throughout the Republic of Moldova, including the Transnistrian region, for the benefit of citizens and economic agents and the resumption of payments to the regional budget and will provide work for 3,000 people who lost their jobs after the seizure of the Railway of Moldova, a State enterprise, in 2004.